

SECURE NETWORK OUTLET FOR SUPPORTING IP DEVICE ADDRESS  
ASSIGNING FUNCTIONALITY

ABSTRACT OF THE DISCLOSURE

5           A secure network outlet for supporting IP device address assigning  
functionality. A network access request is received from an electronic device  
communicatively coupled to intelligent hardware. In one embodiment, a device  
address request is transmitted to a network server. A first device address is  
received at the intelligent hardware from the network server. The intelligent  
10       hardware then assigns a second device address to the electronic device. In  
another embodiment, the intelligent hardware has a pre-assigned first device  
address and assigns a second device address to the electronic device, such  
that the intelligent hardware eliminates the need for a separate device address  
assigning server. The present invention reduces the consumption of global  
15       device addresses within a network, and also provides protection to electronic  
devices by hiding their device addresses from the external network.